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## PODCAST START:

[intro music]

Brian: Welcome to the Queer Theology podcast!

Fr. Shay: Where each episode, we take a queer look at the week's lectionary readings. We're the cofounders of QueerTheology.com and the hosts for this podcast. I'm Father Shay Kearns —

B: And I'm Brian G. Murphy.

FS: This week for the podcast we are taking a look at the lectionary text for August 20<sup>th</sup>. We're looking at Matthew 15. We're going to focus on Matthew 15:10-20, because there is a lot in this entire passage. I encourage you to read the whole thing because there is some juicy stuff in there. But I'm going to go ahead and read 10-20 for us.

“Jesus called the crowd near and said to them, ‘Listen and understand. It’s not what goes into the mouth that contaminates a person in God’s sight. It’s what comes out of the mouth that contaminates the person.’

“Then the disciples came and said to him, ‘Do you know that the Pharisees were offended by what you just said?’

“Jesus replied, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father didn’t plant will be pulled up. Leave the Pharisees alone. They are blind people who are guides to blind people. But if a blind person leads another blind person, they will both fall into a ditch.’ Then Peter spoke up, ‘Explain this riddle to us.’

“Jesus said, ‘Don’t you understand yet? Don’t you know that everything that goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? But what goes out of the mouth comes from the heart. And that’s what contaminates a person in God’s sight. Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adultery, sexual sins,

thefts, false testimonies, and insults. These contaminate a person in God's sight. But eating without washing hands doesn't contaminate in God's sight."

[CEB]

B: [laughs] I just...

FS: There's some stuff here.

B: So, I have the New International Version pulled up and this is a little bit, a) juicier and b) sassier. It starts and says, "What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them." And I just... I know that this is talking about food and eating, but I just can't help, with the Queer Theology podcast, thinking about all the ways in which sex and sexuality are seen as defiling people. And that, even within progressive Christianity or gay Christianity, there are certain types of sex that are bad or icky or defiling, and then there's good, wholesome sex. If you want to put things in your mouth that other people say are defiling you, they're wrong. [laughs] Tell them Jesus says "Don't yuck my yum." What about you, Shay?

FS: I was really struck by this exchange; I had never really noticed it before. The disciples came to Jesus and say, "Don't you know that the Pharisees were offended by what you just said?" and Jesus is basically like—

B: "Don't care!"

FS: Yeah! "Don't care." And more than that, don't even give them the time of day because they don't know what they're talking about. They're leading other people astray. But still, don't waste your time on that. So often in the LGBT Christian movement in particular there's this kind of impulse or drive or whatever to *fix* the unaffirming churches. To stay in the unaffirming churches and get people to change their minds, to stay in relationship with unaffirming people, to be kind and nice and never offend them, and bring them along. I think that this passage is really empowering. To say, "Just stop talking to those people. Let them do their thing." Obviously, like call out when they're doing something inappropriate and harmful, but you don't have to spend your time and energy defending yourself to them or trying to get them to change their minds, because in the end, they're going to lose. They've already lost, and they know that, and that's why they're being so loud. Get on with the work that actually matters and does stuff.

B: Yeah! It also reminds me of earlier in Matthew when Jesus says, "If anyone refuses to welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet as

you leave that house or city.” It’s not a one-time saying of Jesus. This is a theme that Jesus is like, no man, don’t put up with their bullshit. You know, we hear sometimes, “Why are you being so mean? You’re a little bit angry or aggressive. You need to be nice to your allies.” I think there’s a difference between setting boundaries, speaking truth, calling out harm and injustice when you see it, and being mean for the sake of being mean. We’re not advocating being mean to be mean. But if you’re setting healthy boundaries and speaking the truth and calling out injustice and interrupting harm, then Jesus says it doesn’t matter if you offend people. Leave them behind. Shake the dust off your feet as you walk behind them. I see later in the NIV translation, Jesus when he’s explaining it to Peter says, “Are you still so dull?”

FS: [laughs]

B: We have this popular conception, or some people do, that Jesus is this ever-patient, super polite, non-offensive person. And this is to his *friend*. He’s calling him dull. Right? He has even harsher words for the Pharisees – he calls them snakes, a brood of vipers. Jesus is not this, like, docile person. He is a fierce advocate for justice. He’s not taking no shit from nobody.

FS: I just want to plug real quick, Brian – you wrote this great article recently about how to actually be a trans ally in your church. We’ll link that in the show notes and you can access that by going to [QueerTheology.com/transgender-ally](http://QueerTheology.com/transgender-ally). It’s a great list of how you can actually do that work and work in solidarity with trans people. Especially in churches. It includes some free downloads and even a template of a letter that you can send to whoever the ruling body is in your church about changes. Now is the time for us to be even more passionate in our work for justice and for the most marginalized.

[outro music plays]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at [QueerTheology.com](http://QueerTheology.com), which provides resources, community and inspiration for LGBTQ Christians and straight cisgender supporters.

FS: To dive into more of the action, you can connect with us at [QueerTheology.com](http://QueerTheology.com). You can also connect with us online on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram.

B: We’ll see you next week.

**PODCAST END**

Transcript by Taylor Walker